

REMARKS

Status of Claims:

Claims 1 and 2 are amended.

Claims 12 – 29 are cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 30 – 39 are added.

Status of Case:

An Amendment was submitted in this application on December 4, 2006 following a telephone conversation between Examiner Truong and Assignee's attorney, Kenneth J. Cool, on November 16, 2006. This amendment is believed to have been an attempt to incorporate amendments requested by Examiner Truong to include a tangible result in claims 1, 23, and 24. However, PAIR does not appear to indicate that any such amendment was ever entered in this case. In fact, the Final Office Action mailed on December 12, 2006 is indicated as being responsive to a communication mailed on February 2, 2006.

Assignee's representative is responding the December 12 Final Office Action as if the December 4, 2006 amendment was neither entered nor considered by Examiner. To the extent that such Amendment is entered in the present application, Assignee hereby withdraws such Amendment for consideration of this response being filed with a Request for Continued Examination.

Claim Rejections:

Patentable Subject Matter

Examiner rejected claims 23 – 29 alleging that such claims do not set forth patentable subject matter under 35 USC § 101. Claims 23 – 29 are now cancelled. Accordingly, Assignee respectfully submits that this rejection is now moot.

Obviousness

Examiner rejected claims 1 – 11, 23, 26, 28 and 29 as being made obvious by U.S. Patent No. 6,023,699 to Knoblock et al. (the “699 patent”), further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,210,686 to Jernigan (the “686 patent”) and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,339,767 to Rivette (the “767 patent”). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

To establish a prima facie case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, and not based on applicant's disclosure. *In re Vaack*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991). MPEP § 2142.

Examiner acknowledges that the ‘699 patent does not disclose a “pair of configuration management tables” as recited in claim 1. The ‘686 patent appears to show an explosion control table 36 and a bill of materials components data file 44. Explosion control table 36 contains the results of exploding an assembly down one branch of a bill of materials. Material components data file 44 is searched for all components having a particular assembly as a parent. As such components are fetched, they are added to Explosion control table 36 with information such as item number, bill of material level and component sequence number. [‘686 patent, col. 3, ll. 27 –

53] However, the '686 patent does not disclose, suggest or make obvious a "configuration management status table" and a "configuration management memo table" as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, the '686 patent does not make up for the deficiencies of the '699 patent in meeting limitations directed to a "pair of configuration management tables" as recited in claim 1.

Examiner cites the '767 patent as showing a "pair of configuration management tables." Specifically, Examiner equates a BOM table 1219 with a "configuration management status table" and equates a BOM table 1217 with a "configuration memo table." However, Assignee respectfully submits that the '767 patent does not disclose, suggest or make obvious accessing a table using a first index key defining a group of continuation management records for a part definition, location definition or unit definition, or accessing a table using a second index key defining current configuration management records for a part definition, location definition, or a unit location as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, Assignee respectfully submits that claim 1, and claims 2 – 11 depending therefrom, distinguish over any combination of the '686, '699 and '767 patents, proper or otherwise, and respectfully requests withdrawal of rejection of claims 1 – 11 under 35 USC § 103(a).

Claims 23, 26, 28 and 29 have been cancelled without prejudice. Accordingly, rejection of these claims under 35 USC § 103(a) is now moot.

New claims 30 – 39 include limitations similar to those in claim 1 which are discussed above. Accordingly, Assignee respectfully submits that these claims similarly distinguish over any combination of the '686, '699 and '767 patents, proper or otherwise.

It is noted that claimed subject matter may be patentably distinguished from the cited documents for additional reasons; however, the foregoing is believed to be sufficient. Likewise, it is noted that the Assignee's omission to comment directly upon any of the positions asserted by the Examiner in the office action does not indicate agreement or acquiescence with those asserted positions. For example, Assignee does not agree or acquiesce to Examiner's position as to whether there is any suggestion to combine the cited documents or whether there would be any reasonable expectation of success from making such a combination.

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CONCLUSION

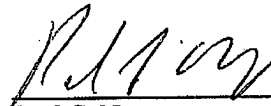
In view of the amendments and the remarks above, Assignee submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Entry of this amendment and allowance of the application are respectfully solicited.

If, however, the Examiner believes that there are any unresolved issues requiring action in any of the claims now pending in the application, it is requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned Paul G. Nagy at (503) 439-6500 so that appropriate arrangements can be made for expeditiously resolving such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Berkeley Law and Technology Group, LLP

Dated: 3/14/07


Paul G. Nagy
Registration No. 37,896

Customer No. 43831
Berkeley Law and Technology Group, LLP
1700 NW 167th Place, Suite 240
Beaverton, OR 97006
503-439-6500